DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 468 297 EA 031 863

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TITLE Superintendent Turnover in Relationship to Incumbent School Board Member Defeat in Washington from 1993-2000: A Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis.

PUB DATE 2002-04-01

NOTE 41p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, LA, April 1-5, 2002).

PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Board Administrator Relationship; *Boards of Education; Elementary Secondary Education; Governance; *Labor Turnover; Occupational Information; Political Influences; *Politics of Education; *Superintendents

IDENTIFIERS *Dissatisfaction Theory; *Washington

ABSTRACT

Educational administrators have been aware of the effects of politics on the effective operation of schools since the political reform movement in the late 1800s and early 1900s. During this time of increased change and the demand for accountability, the ability to explain or anticipate political conflict in the community would be welcome by many administrators and school board members. This paper reports on a study conducted to determine whether the Dissatisfaction Theory of Democracy, which asserts that the governance of local school boards is a democratic process, can be used in describing the relationship between incumbent school board members' defeat and superintendent turnover. A postcard survey was mailed to 296 Washington State superintendents to obtain quantitative data, and qualitative data from interviews and document collection were collected in two school districts. Findings showed that more work needs to be done in using the Dissatisfaction Theory in that quantitative analysis will not yield reliable results if not used intelligently, though qualitative information may be more enlightening. It is recommended that longitudinal studies spanning at least 50 years be conducted and that researchers should continue to explore the best method of analyzing the statistical data gathered in Dissatisfaction Theory studies. (Contains 137 references.) (RT)

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Superintendent Turnover in Relationship to Incumbent School Board Member Defeat in Washington From 1993-2000: A Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis

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Superintendent Turnover in Relationship to Incumbent School Board Member Defeat in Washington from 1993-2000: A Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis

Introduction to the Study

Educational administrators have been aware of the effects of politics on the efficient and effective operation of schools since the political reform movement in the late 1800's'and early 1900's. Local politics can influence the trust between the community and local school board members, superintendents and building-level administrators. The loss of trust often increases stress in teachers and support staff and can negatively impact student attitudes and school climate. During the 1990's, school administrators, in Washington State, faced the challenge of statewide educational reform and a call for increased accountability from the public. Schools have a need to provide students and staff a feeling of stability and continuity of purpose, especially in an educational environment of change. In the 1990's, the Washington State legislature required improved academic results from all public schools while creating an option for parents to move their students to other schools. During this time of increased change and the demand for accountability, the ability to explain or anticipate political conflict in the community would be welcome by many administrators and school board members.

Political Theories for Local School Governance

Researchers have proposed several theories to help explain the political environment within schools and their communities. Theories include the Competition Theory (Mitchell, 1978), also known as the Continuous Participation Theory (Zeigler & Jennings, 1974), the Decision Output Theory (Wirt & Kirst, 1982), also called the Responsiveness Theory (Mitchell, 1978), and the Dissatisfaction Theory of Democracy (Iannaccone & Lutz, 1970). These theories vary in their premise as to whether the governance of education is truly democratic and responsive to, or influenced by, the citizenry.

The Competition Theory (Mitchell, 1978) also known as the Continuous Participation Theory (Zeigler & Jennings, 1974) is a theory whose premise contends the governance of public schools through the local school board is non-democratic. In supporting their theory researchers site the lack of voter turnout, a lack of serious competitors for school board seats, a lack of different political platforms and/or positions among the candidates, and targeted recruitment for candidates. They suggest these factors disallow the local school board from being truly representative of their constituency and therefore undemocratic in its composition and function.

The Decision Output Theory (Wirt & Kirst, 1982), also called the Responsiveness Theory (Mitchell, 1978) is another popular theory supporting the idea of an undemocratic local school board governance. Proponents of this theory suggest the governance of local school boards is effected by the limitations of economic and personnel resources in local school districts. Decision Output theorists point to the incongruity between community requests and school board responses. They purport schools cannot respond to the community's demands because they lack the resources to do so. They also point to the low number of citizens who actually give the school board input. Therefore, school boards select which actions to take from few options with limited resources causing subjectivity and incongruity in their decisions. The Dissatisfaction Theory of Democracy (Iannaccone & Lutz, 1970) rejects the premise of these

previous theories and suggests the governance of local school boards is a democratic process. In a public school, local community politics most directly affect school board members and superintendents. Public dissatisfaction can result in school board member defeat at the polls or school board members forced into early resignation or retirement. In the absence of tenure laws for administrators in Washington State, superintendents lack protections and are most vulnerable to replacement. Grady (1989) indicated that frequent superintendent turnover causes discontinuity in organizational goals, policy and procedures, and can thus negatively affect the entire organization. Olson (1995) stated that the rapid turnover of top school officials impedes the achievement of positive school reform.

The Dissatisfaction Theory

In the opinion of many researchers, political turmoil in a school district is best described using the Dissatisfaction Theory of Democracy (Iannaccone & Lutz, 1970). The Dissatisfaction Theory of Democracy describes the political cycle of schools as having a long period of political inaction punctuated by episodic turmoil of great intensity. This episodic conflict usually results in the defeat of incumbent school board members followed by the dismissal of the superintendent within three years (Lutz & Iannaccone, 1986). The progressive and causal chain of events described in the Dissatisfaction Theory Model as represented in Figure 1 are, (1) an increase in community dissatisfaction creating a change in community values, (2) the defeat of an incumbent school board member, representing a change in community participation in the election process, (3) the dismissal of the superintendent, reflecting a change in the values of the school board members, (4) succession by an outside superintendent candidate, and (5) school policy change.

The Dissatisfaction Theory would be more useful for administrators if the sequence and causality of the theory's elements were verified. For example, if the Dissatisfaction Theory's progressive events were predictive descriptors of imminent political conflict, a superintendent would want to respond to an incumbent board defeat by assuming significant dissatisfaction existed in the community. The superintendent would be prudent in pursuing an intensive needs analysis and following the analysis with appropriate policy changes to reflect the change in community values. These actions could allow the superintendent to avoid further threat to his or her or board members' positions. On the other hand, if the Dissatisfaction Theory's sequence of causal events were not an accurate description of the political situation, the superintendent could assume a more unpredictable sequence of events might follow a board members' defeat. Under this presumption, many actions or indeed inaction on the part of the superintendent and board could produce the same results. Since a reaction could not give a higher than random chance of the preferred outcome, the superintendent and board may be better served doing nothing and saving the district time and money. If research shows that the predicted events in the Dissatisfaction Theory's model do not cause the next event in sequence to occur at a higher than random rate, the theory is of less usefulness for practicing administrators.

Figure 1: Variables and Indicators of Change in the Theoretical Model as Described by the Dissatisfaction Theory of Democracy

Change in Community Values*
-community dissatisfaction from a school or community event

-student enrollment**
-assessed valuation**
-school district population**

Change in Community Participation*
-challenges to an incumbent school board member

-number of candidates**
-distribution of votes among incumbents/challengers**
-number of registered voters**
Change in School Board Members Values*
-defeat of incumbent school board member

-incumbent defeat**
-decline in number of unanimous board votes**
Change in the School District Policies*
-superintendent turnover

-school district budget**

*Theoretical variables as described by Reed (1985)
** Variables analyzed by Maguire (1989) and other researchers
Italics indicate theoretical components of the Dissatisfaction Theory as described by Iannaccone & Lutz (1970)

History of the Dissatisfaction Theory and Literature Review

A significant volume of research has been conducted on the Dissatisfaction Theory over the past 35 years. The Dissatisfaction Theory began with the Lutz dissertation case in 1962, which included an ethnography, and 25 years of historical data from a single school district. Iannaccone & Lutz (1970) later developed a model to explain the causality of events in the Dissatisfaction Theory in the Robertsdale study. Most research has focused on individual links in the Theory's chain of causal events, with initial studies supporting a strong relationship between incumbent school board member defeat and superintendent turnover (Kirkendall, 1966; Walden, 1966; Carlson, 1972; Ledoux & Burlingame, 1973; Thorsted, 1974; Garberina, 1975: Moen, 1971; Haas, 1978; Lutz & Iannaccone, 1978; Lutz, 1978). Iannaccone & Lutz (1994) said, "early research on the dissatisfaction theory, from 1962 to 1972, did not attempt to probe empirically the full range of the theoretical argument." They go on to contend that subsequent

research over the last two decades "replicated the earlier studies and supported more of the theory's arguments."

However, recent research attempting to show a relationship between incumbent school board defeat and superintendent turnover has been less supportive of the theory. Some studies have supported a causal link between incumbent school board defeat and superintendent turnover (Hosman, et. al., 1987; Schoenefeld, 1986; Fritz, 1988; Jentges, 1988; Weninger, 1989; Maguire, 1989; Anderson, 1989; Johnson-Howard, 1990). Conversely, other studies have found no significant relationship between school board member defeat and superintendent turnover (Ledoux, 1971; Flynn, 1984; Rada, 1984; Chmara, 1989; Poyourow-Ripple, 1990; Sullivan, 1990; Chance, 1992; Krise, 1994; Kitchens, 1994; Brackett, 1995). In many of the studies supporting a relationship between incumbent defeat and superintendent turnover, a weak or sporadic relationship exists between the chain of presumably causal events (Jentges, 1988; Hosman, 1989). Other studies received criticism for using ethnographies of individual school districts selected because they fit the Dissatisfaction Model. While some research has supported the use of the Dissatisfaction Theory in analyzing political conflict, few studies have been able to verify any single causal factor, or combination of factors, to predict conflict (Lutz & Hunt, 1981; Lutz & Wang, 1987; Hosman, 1989)

As stated earlier, nearly all studies conducted to date on causal events in the Dissatisfaction Theory, focus on single links in the chain of events. One area where this is most critical is in studies conducted to determine a relationship between incumbent defeat of school board members and superintendent turnover.

Ledoux, in his 1971 New Mexico study, questioned some assumptions about the universal application of the Dissatisfaction Theory. Ledoux found no clear relationship to previously identified indicators of community change and school board member and superintendent turnover. Ledoux suggested that gathering a combination of varied and interrelated factors unique to each community may be important to reach a clearer explanation of the data on school board and superintendent turnover. Most other studies on school board incumbent defeat and superintendent turnover raise similar concerns about whether the Dissatisfaction Theory effectively explains most school district governance scenarios. For example, a school district may have multiple incumbent school board defeats without the ensuing superintendent turnover predicted by the Dissatisfaction Theory. In addition, the Theory does not explain school districts that experience multiple superintendent turnovers without preceding incumbent school board defeat.

Nearly every study from 1960 to the present has justified the use of retirement and resignation data as equivalent to incumbent defeat data. This assumption is explained by suggesting that board members who resign or retire anticipate defeat, thereby making these data equivalent to an incumbent defeat. However, studies conducted to identify reasons for board and superintendent turnover do not support this conclusion. In reviewing past studies, data indicate that approximately 80% of all superintendents and school board turnover was due to retirement or resignation. Studies indicate that superintendent and board members who do resign or retire do so for personal, financial, or moral reasons rather than political conflict in the community (Pope, 1974; Erickson, 1978; Bentley, 1980; Thies, 1980; Mitchell, 1983; Robinson, 1987; Hosman, 1990; Chance, 1992). Thus, most board members and superintendents do not report political pressure as the predominant reason for resignation or retirement. The studies that consider resignation and retirement the same as incumbent defeat have been longitudinal studies primarily based on ex post facto data. This left those researchers no way of determining "why"

board members or superintendents left their positions. It can be reasonably argued that this assumption in previous studies could have altered their relationship calculations and thus their conclusions about the causal link between board member defeat and superintendent turnover.

A need existed, therefore to conduct a two-phase study of the Dissatisfaction Theory including the study of superintendent turnover in relationship to school board member defeat adding a distinction between defeat and nonpolitical turnover of board members. Further, there was a need to include qualitative data collection methods for school districts that do not follow the causal chain of events described in the Dissatisfaction Theory. Such knowledge could inform the seemingly complex series of political interactions in public schools. This research may provide a possible expansion of the Dissatisfaction Theory to expand on school district data that do not seem to fit into the existing Dissatisfaction Theory.

Research Methodology and Data Analysis Methods

This study used different research methodologies in each of the two phases of the project. For purposes of collecting data on superintendent turnover and school board member turnover in Phase I, quantitative methodologies were used. School board member defeat, resignation, retirement, and the reasons for school board turnover were collected using survey methods. This involved the use of a double-sided postcard survey sent to all 296 Washington State superintendents. The postcard survey employed a modified forced choice design. A "modified" forced choice survey allows the respondent to select from a number of pre-determined options and also add independent responses if desired. In addition, statewide data on superintendent turnover in Washington State for the past seven years was gathered from ex post facto records from the Washington Association for School Administrators. The data on school board/superintendent turnover was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative measures. The study analyzed district size (rural and urban as defined by the United States Census Bureau) to determine if there was a relationship between school board member defeat, superintendent turnover and district size. The study distinguished school board member and superintendent turnover versus defeat to determine if making this distinction would affect the results of the relationship analysis.

The Chi-square Test for Independence and the Bonferroni t statistic were used in this study to test for significant correlation between superintendent and school board member turnover, as well as superintendent turnover and school board member defeat. The Chi square test determines the statistical significance between the expected and observed frequencies in categorical data. The level of statistical significance for the study was established at .05 with a corrected alpha level factor of .033 from the Bonferroni t formula results, to avoid Type I error common for multiple Chi-square testing using the same data.

Previous studies have also relied upon the use of Chi-square analysis. These studies note that the superintendent is either replaced or retained and the school board member is either replaced or retained. This makes the data dichotomous and thus, an appropriate statistical analysis for these studies (Sullivan, 1990; Flynn, 1984; Kitchen, 1994; Brackett, 1995; Williams, 1993; Walden, 1966; Moen, 1971; Ledoux, 1971; Garberina, 1975). However, the use of the Chi-square analysis has been a major point of debate and contention over the last decade, since many studies using this statistical measure found no statistically significant relationship between incumbent board member defeat and superintendent turnover. In an attempt to detect a potential relationship between school board member and superintendent turnover, Sullivan (1990) inserted

the Yates Correction Factor, Krise (1994) used a 3-way ANOVA analysis, Thorsted (1974) used a Challenger Index, and Lutz and Wang (1988) employed a DISSAT factor. None of these statistical manipulations has reaped the kind of results that would support the use of the Dissatisfaction Theory model for predicting political events in local school districts. Lutz and Wang (1987), prompted by these non-supportive studies, suggested that many researchers have misinterpreted a portion of the Dissatisfaction Theory. They suggested that the lack of sufficient dissatisfaction to cause the resulting political turmoil described by the Dissatisfaction Theory model, does not support the conclusion that the community is satisfied. Lutz and Wang (1978), point out that communities that are satisfied, apathetic, or not adequately dissatisfied will all respond similarly by not removing incumbent school board members. This could be easily misinterpreted as a failure in the Dissatisfaction Theory model when viewing only quantitative data. This criticism would exist no matter which quantitative analysis methods were used to establish a relationship between school board member and superintendent turnover. They point out that the community needs to become dissatisfied *enough* to finally take action. Lutz and Wang (1987) suggest that it may be more informative to analyze a wide spectrum of political, social, and economic factors that might indicate the level of community dissatisfaction. Also, it is intuitive that each of these factors may play a more or less critical role in leading to school board member defeat and that this combination of variables can differ between districts and over time. As a result of Lutz's contentions, McAdams (1996) supported using a simple statistical analysis test because of the limitations of statistical research in examining the myriad of variables that may affect school governance.

Once the quantitative analysis led to the selection of districts for Phase II of the study, qualitative methods were employed. This included semi-structured open-ended interviews and document collection. Qualitative data was collected at two school districts selected by using a set of selection criteria. These selection criteria focus on what Freeborn (1966) called "deviant cases" that is, districts whose quantitative data measures, typically used to study the Dissatisfaction Theory, don't support the theory. An example of this type of district profile would be one in which the district had high enrollment and population change and high school board turnover with no ensuing superintendent change. One of the unique designs of this study was the use of a combination both quantitative and qualitative methods which led to a richer set of data that more fully explained an apparent lack of relationship between events suggested in the Dissatisfaction Theory model.

Analysis of Data

The analysis of the data were directed by hypothetical predictions established in the dissatisfaction theory and its model of causal events. Data gathered on school board member and superintendent turnover was analyzed statistically using the Chi-square Test for Independence and the Bonferroni t test to determine significant relationship between superintendent turnover and school board member turnover.

A statistical test of relationship like the Chi-square test is used to detect the presence, strength, and/or direction of a linear relationship among variables. The Chi-square value is a numerical expression that signifies the relationship between two variables (Kerlinger, 1986). It allows a researcher to measure the association between the variables. The statistical formula used in this study was the Chi-square test and the Bonferroni t formula. Chi-square results indicated whether the positively stated hypotheses were accepted or rejected. The Bonferroni t

formula is used to adjust the acceptable probability or "alpha" level to decrease the occurrence of Type I errors. Type I errors are common when multiple Chi-square tests are used with the same data. Type I errors occur when a positively-stated hypothesis is accepted when they should, in fact, be rejected. I used an Excel computer software program that ran a Chi-square analysis for me upon entry of the dichotomous data. An alpha level of .05 was used, corrected to .033 by the Bonferroni t formula.

During Phase I of the study, a wide variety of quantitative data was collected. Relational analysis using the Chi-square statistical test was performed on each of these data to predict the presence of a statistically significant relationship between the turnover of the superintendent and board members. Relational analyses included the following four tests:

1. Chi-square analyses were run between the number of school board member changes and superintendent changes in total. Comparisons were made between how many board members changed over a seven-year period and how many superintendent changes took place over that same time. The Chi-square analyses were conducted to determine if increased school board member turnover equates to increased superintendent turnover as the Dissatisfaction Theory suggests.

2. Chi-square analyses were conducted to determine how soon after board change, superintendent turnover occurs. Previous studies suggest that superintendent turnover should occur within three years of board turnover.

3. Chi-square analyses were performed comparing the size of the school district and the number of board and superintendent changes. This helped determine whether the district size was significant to the number of changes on the board or superintendency.

4. Chi-square analyses were conducted comparing school board member defeat and superintendent turnover, with a focus on using only data judged to be a bona fide school board member defeat. Bona fide school board member defeat included any turnover where the superintendent noted political pressure or community dissatisfaction. School board member defeat was defined as turnover when superintendents noted any questionable or unknown reasons for school board member turnover. However, data that indicated turnover due to apolitical causes including death, moving out of the district, job change, illness, or retirement were removed and not counted as a school board member defeat for these particular relational analyses.

For phase II of the study, two schools were selected based upon selection criteria noted earlier. Primarily, districts that appeared to have no significant relationship between school board member and superintendent turnover were potential sites. In these selected districts, interview data, document data, and descriptive statistics were collected to determine the presence of qualitative evidence that may inform quantitative data that did not seem to support events predicted by the Dissatisfaction Theory. Since several previous studies have shown no relationship between school board turnover and superintendent dismissal, it is possible that each

school district could have it's own unique set of circumstances that must be determined to properly evaluate the efficacy of the Dissatisfaction Theory.

The qualitative data from the interviews and document collection was coded and analyzed for any emerging themes. Board minutes, newspaper articles, interview responses and other documents were scanned for the presence of community dissatisfaction that may have emerged without an accompanying population change or other clearly evident quantitative change. The interaction of personalities on the board, unpredicted tragedy, the actions of single individuals not expected to be influential or any number of issues not evidenced in quantitative measures were reviewed.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited by including results on school board and superintendent turnover from districts in Washington State only. Research conclusions must be generalized with caution for districts outside Washington State for several reasons. First, states vary in their degree of decentralized control. In a study conducted by Wirt (1978) they found Washington State ranked the fifth most centralized state in the United States. It could be argued that the lesser the local control the less effect local elections would impact school policy change, since policy is more highly regulated from the state government level, minimizing local potential for change. Second, state election procedures vary from state to state, which could significantly affect the outcome when comparing data. In Washington State, school boards are elected officials, while in some states they are appointed. It could be reasonably argued that states with appointed board members may not be expected to follow a democratic replacement pattern as described in the Dissatisfaction Theory. In addition, Washington State holds a pre-election primary if more than two candidates are running for the school board seat. Usually this information has not been evaluated in studies of the Dissatisfaction Theory. Arguably, an increase in opponents running could be viewed as a measure of increased dissatisfaction. Finally, Washington state school districts, as mentioned earlier, can be "director" or "non-director" districts. At-large votes could cause board change differently than votes restricted by a specific geographical location. For example, an opponent to a particular school board member may be unable to run in the election because they live in the wrong geographical location within the district. It could be argued that this would possibly slow down school board turnover. This added variable could change the dynamics of what occurs in a school district. It can be seen that state to state comparisons are problematic.

The study is limited in terms of the time period, spanning seven years from 1993 to 2000. Reed (1985) called attention to the need for a longer-term study of at least 10 years. However, a seven year period should be adequate since it includes four opportunities for school board change since elections in Washington State occur every two years on odd numbered years. Since school board members' terms are staggered every other year school board members may be replaced. While other studies have used longer time frames to study the relationship between incumbent school board member defeat and superintendent turnover, many studies have reported results within a six year time span. Lutz and Iannaccone (1986) stated that superintendent turnover should be evident by the third year after the defeat of a school board member.

The study is limited since survey responses may or may not be considered completely accurate. Superintendents responding as to why school board members resigned or retired may feel compelled by political interests to be less than forthright. However, qualitative data collected to verify results in two of the districts should help support the accuracy of survey data at least in these districts. Also, there have been few studies conducted that distinguish between apolitical retirement or resignation, and incumbent defeat. Most studies used ex post facto data and were not able to determine why school board members or superintendents left their position. The study was also limited since the community was not surveyed directly to assess the presence of community dissatisfaction.

Phase I-Presentation of the Quantitative Data

Study Sample

A postcard survey described earlier was mailed to each of the 296 superintendents in the state of Washington. The original survey asked for election results for a time span of 1993 to 1998 along with other questions concerning enrollment, population changes, political turmoil, and reasons for school board member turnover. Later, in 2000, in order to gather additional data, surveys were sent to all the districts that had responded to the first survey. This survey expanded the period from 1993 to 2000 adding an additional election year to the results, for a total of four election years. The survey in Phase I of the study was sent to all 296 school districts in the state of Washington and returned by 176 for a return rate of 59%. Representation of the state as a whole was analyzed using Chi-square tests and it was determined that the sample had a high level of representation based upon district size, organizational structure, and geographic distribution.

Presentation of the data in the original dissertation included a series of 49 tables similar to Table 1. In these data tables, each election year comparisons, both individually and collectively, were shown for the years 1993 to 2000. Additionally, data table were shown for each election year distinguishing school board member turnover and school board member defeat. For this paper, the data were compiled into two summary tables, Table 2 and Table 3. Table 2 shows the Chi-square analysis of superintendent turnover within 1, 2, 3, and 4 years of school board member turnover and defeat in Washington from 1993-2000.

The overall results of the Chi-square analysis reveals that none of the Dissatisfaction Theory hypotheses are supported at a Chi-square level of .033. It is, however, notable that when distinguishing between all school board member turnover and bona fide school board member defeat, the probability is much closer and meets the .033 standard for 1 year after school board member defeat.

Table 3 shows the Chi-square analysis of superintendent turnover in Washington state within 1, 2, 3, and 4 years of school board member turnover and defeat taken individually after each election in 1993, 1995, 1997, and 1999. The only Chi-square analysis that showed a significant correlation is superintendent turnover 5 years after school board member defeat in the 1995 election. In looking at the graphical representation several important analyses are notable. First, if taking a Chi-square statistical level slightly less stringent, but within the measures used by some researchers more data comparisons prove to be significant. At a .05 probability level there is a statistically significant relationship between superintendent turnover and school board member turnover one year after the 1999, and school board member defeat 1 year after the 1997 elections. When using a probability level of .10 there are two statistically significant comparisons for school board member turnover and six for school board member defeat.

Looking at the graph from an overall perspective it can be clearly seen that distinguishing for bona fide school board member defeat as was done in this study had a dramatic impact on the results of the quantitative analysis, even though results still did not show strong support

Table 1. Chi-square Analysis of Superintendent Turnover in Washington State within Four Years of Board Member Defeat Data, of the 176 Districts Surveyed, After the 1995 Election.

Superintendent Turnover 4 Years Later	Number of Board Member Defeat 1995 0	1	2	3	Totals
Yes	9	6	0	0	15
No	138	17	5	1	161
Totals	147	23	5	1	176

$\chi^2(df=3, \underline{N} = 176) = 10.75, \underline{p} = 0.0132$

Standards: $\chi^2 = 7.82, \underline{p} < .05$

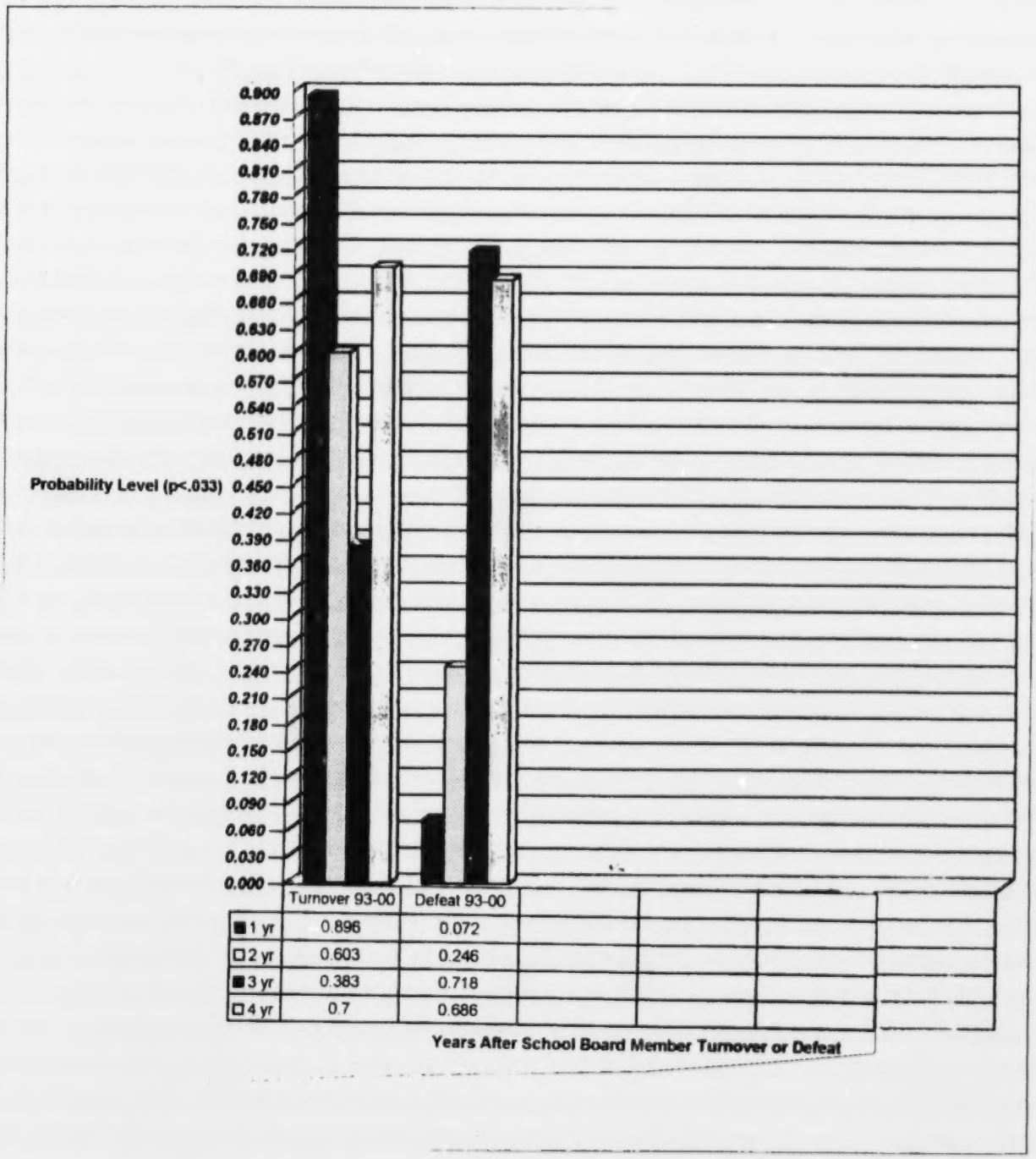
for the hypotheses. Remembering that there were numerous other variables not considered in this study that have been used in analyses in previous studies, the impact on the results from the defeat versus turnover data is powerful and as a single variable has had much more significant impact on the statistical results than any other variable considered to date by other researchers.

Phase II- Presentation of the Qualitative Data

The Dissatisfaction Theory of American Democracy's explanatory model, devised by Iannaccone and Lutz (1970), rests on four statements of theory. They describe the school board as social systems, which can be either open or closed. If the system is closed, also known as an "elite" school board, the school board members become progressively less knowledgeable about the needs of the community. If community values or desires change, and the board does not respond to these changes, the community and board become increasingly separated in philosophy or values. When this separation reaches a high enough level of dissatisfaction, community members correct the problem through school board elections by defeating incumbent board members. School board member changes, in the Dissatisfaction Theory model, lead to superintendent turnover and finally a change in school policies.

In this portion of the study it is helpful to refer back to Figure 1 which characterizes the Dissatisfaction Theory using four related political factors (Reed 1985): (1) community member values, (2) citizen participation in school board elections, (3) school board member values, and (4) school district policies. The Dissatisfaction Theory described these factors as being connected in a causal progression. Using Reed's factors, changes in community values leads to

Presentation Table 2: Chi-square Analysis of Superintendent Turnover in Washington State within 1, 2, 3, and 4 Years of School Board Member Turnover and Defeat, 1993-2000 Collectively(p< .033)



	Turnover 93-00	Defeat 93-00
1 yr	0.896	0.072
2 yr	0.603	0.246
3 yr	0.383	0.718
4 yr	0.7	0.686

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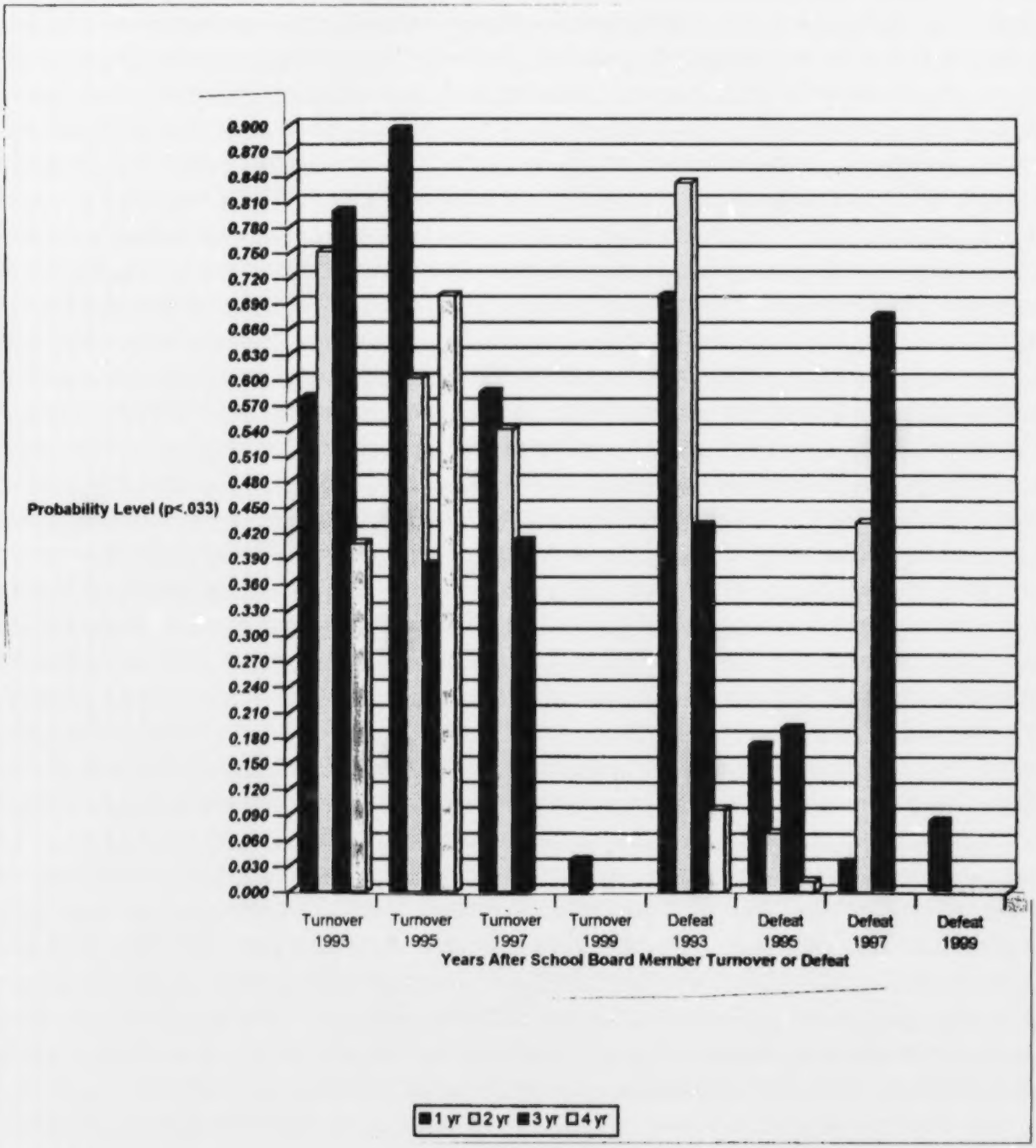
Presentation Table 3: Chi-square Analysis of Superintendent Turnover in Washington State within 1, 2, 3, and 4 Years of School Board Member Turnover or Defeat after the 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999 Elections Individually (p< .033)



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changes in citizen participation in school board elections, which leads to a change in school board values and which causes change in school policies. These changes are characterized as episodic traumatic events. Dissatisfaction within the community can build for many years, while political peace and harmony appears to exist. At the point when dissatisfaction reaches a critical mass, the voters take action through incumbent school board member defeat.

Researchers have tried to find measurable variables for each of these links in the causal chain of events. This study has joined other recent quantitative research efforts to demonstrate a significant statistical relationship between school board member defeat (measuring change in school board member values), and superintendent turnover (measuring change in school policies) using quantitative data. The results however have been mixed. Statistical analysis of the most recent Dissatisfaction Theory studies has not been able to support a relationship between incumbent school board member defeat and superintendent turnover despite the practical fit of the Theory's chain of events in real-life school scenarios. As a result, qualitative data were gathered in this study, and is presented here to enrich the quantitative data and examine evidence for a value change in the community, election participation, school board member, and school policies.

Data were collected using traditional qualitative field methods (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Best & Kahn, 1998; Borg & Gall, 1983). These included semi-structured open-ended interviews and document collection. This study selected two school districts using specific criteria as noted previously. In order to demonstrate whether qualitative data could uncover the values changes missed in quantitative data measures, the two school districts selected were chosen because they seemed to run counter to the predictions of the Dissatisfaction Theory.

The first district selected had high incumbent school board turnover without the accompanying superintendent turnover expected. For purposes of confidentiality, this school shall be called the Adams School District located in the town of Adam. The second district selected will be known as the Brown School District located in the town of Brown. Pseudonyms will be used for all interviewees.

The Adams Community, School District, and Superintendent

District profile

The Adams School District is located in a town by the same name, which is rural and remote. The community is located on an island and is sustained mainly by a military base that constitutes most of the community's economic stability. The community also has some logging and some farming, however, the military base and service jobs supporting the military personnel constitute the bulk of the economy. Recently, the community has attracted retirees who enjoy the remote island setting and the beautiful surroundings which offer water sports, fishing, hiking, and beach combing.

In the 1970's, the community was much smaller and described as being "conservative and closely knit." After the expansion of the military base in the 1980's, the community grew rapidly nearly doubling in size to its current population of about 20,000. During the time span of this study from 1993 to 2000, the community population had remained fairly stable increasing slightly by 3-4. The population is fairly transient with military personnel transferring about

every 3-4 years. In the 1980's, the military base changed its operations, which altered the socioeconomic mix of the community.

In 2000 there were about 6,500 students accommodated by one high school of about 2,000, two middle schools of around 700 each, and six elementary schools housing about 3,500 collectively. Student population, following the community trend, increased dramatically around 1980 when the local military base was expanded and the community population nearly doubled. In 1991, the base duties were reduced and the population dropped by around 30%. Since then, student enrollment has increased or decreased by around 0.5% each year remaining fairly stable. Assessed valuation for the school district has remained steady or slightly declined since 1991, with the loss of military federal funds to the school. Instability and conflict characterized the school board in 1986-87 and again in 1993. From 1993 to 1999 the school board has had 10 school board member turnovers, but is described as "very stable" by school personnel and board members.

Dr. Miller was appointed to the post of interim superintendent in June of 1993. He had previously held the position of Assistant Superintendent in the Adams School District for 6 years. He had also been very active in state organizations and on state committees, and had done extensive consulting. He described this time in his career as one of professional growth. After one year as interim superintendent, Dr. Miller was appointed to the superintendent position. The job was not posted. The outgoing superintendent who had served from 1988-1993 left when "budget problems pressured him to resign."

Within the first few months of his superintendency, Dr. Miller had made several important changes in the school district due to a serious budgetary crisis. These involved staff and program reductions. Dr. Miller assessed that the budget problems had occurred from over staffing, adding professional development days, and technology expenditures. Dr. Miller relayed that now he "spends more time in community activities than (his) professional activities." He is active in local service clubs but no longer attends conferences or professional events. In characterizing the mood at the time of the budgetary crisis, he shared what he called "the watering hole analogy." He said, "When the watering hole shrinks, all the animals start to look at each other in a different way." He encouraged his staff at the time to "not look at each other like wild animals but join together to help solve this common problem." He disclosed that, "as long as I said 'no' to everyone and cut everybody, people were supportive."

Change in Community Values

Changes in the community values can be indicated by a variety of demographic changes within the community over time. The data reported here includes: (1) changes in assessed valuation of property within the school district, (2) changes in school enrollment, as hypothesized by Lutz & Iannaccone (1970), (3) changes in socioeconomic status of the community or school population, and (4) changes in external resources. Data in these areas were collected for the time period 1980 to the present, a span of 20 years.

The assessed valuation in the district jumped ahead by 50% around 1980, due to the expansion of the local military base. The military base employs 60% of the community directly with the other 40% of the population engaged in service business to provide for the military personnel. As a result, property valuation is extrinsically linked to the military base in this community. From 1980 to 1991 the assessed valuation stayed relatively constant until 1991 when the base underwent a reduction. Assessed valuation dropped by around 18% at that time, due to a population decline. From 1991 to 2000 the assessed valuation has increased steadily

keeping pace with normal inflationary increases common in Washington state at an a average of about 4% per year. As the community has increased in its number of retirees, certain home values have increased more quickly for water view properties. One unique situation is the vast increase of subsidized housing in the area from 1995 to 2000. This was mainly caused by a change in the type of military base employee in 1995, when jobs requiring mainly officers were replaced by jobs for mostly enlisted military personnel. The lower incomes of the enlisted personnel required different housing in the area. This housing has since attracted low income families from surrounding areas needing hard-to-find subsidized housing. This has caused a slower assessed valuation growth than has been experienced in neighboring communities.

Student enrollment also had a dramatic increase in 1980 with the expansion of the military base. The military base constitutes 60% of the students enrolled in the school so base changes directly impact school enrollment. At that time, enrollment increased by about 30% to an enrollment of around 6,700 full time equivalent (FTE) students. In 1991, the base reduction lowered student enrollment in one year to the current level of 6,500 students. Since then student enrollment has been fairly steady, increasing or decreasing each year by around 25 students for only a 0.5% change. Because of the transient nature of military positions, around 15% of the students change each year. Since most military positions last 3 to 4 years, most students who start school together do not graduate together.

The socioeconomic status of the district remained stable from 1980 until around 1995. Before 1980, the community was comprised of lower middle class blue collar laborers on the base, and some farming and logging. The community was characterized by locals as, "conservative and tight-knit." In 1980, the military base expansion included adding the type of projects that required mostly college degreed and highly paid officers. This not only increased the population of the community and school as noted above, it changed the socioeconomic status of the population to an upper middle class professional community. This continued until 1995 when the projects at the military base were changed to those that required enlisted personnel who generally have less education and command a smaller salary. At this time, the socioeconomic status of the community returned to a low middle class status. The superintendent reported that this change "did not change the expectations on the school system."

It seems every community has its own unique circumstances that make it different from others. In Adams, the military base brought with it a special federal designation for the community and thus a large amount of Federal funds to the school. Since the base opening in 1940, the school district has received approximately 22% of its revenues from special Federal funds provided because of the military base. As a result, the community is one of the few in the state of Washington that has never run a maintenance and operations levy. Maintenance and operations levies are taxes assessed against the property owners in the community that provides around 10% of the revenue of school districts in the state. These levies are considered by most districts as necessary to school operations and are voted on every 2 years by the community. Votes on levies must meet or exceed 60% making these critical political events in the life of most districts. In fact, often political dissatisfaction is detected through levy failures. In Adams, these Federal funds have slowly declined from 1995 to the present and thus the district is contemplating running its first levy in the year 2000. Because of the lack of a local levy, the tax rates in Adams are much lower than in other communities. Another unique characteristic of the community, brought on by the presence of the military base, is the absence of a hot lunch program in the district, a service not expected by officer's families.

Change in Citizen Participation in School Board Elections

Changes in citizen participation in the school board election can be determined by investigating voting and election records before and during increased school board or superintendent turnover. The Dissatisfaction Theory would contend that as community members become more dissatisfied with the school, they become more active in trying to change their representative on the school board. Data that can indicate this change in participation include: (1) changes in the number of candidates running for school board seats, (2) changes in the number of votes received by incumbents versus the total votes cast in the election (Lutz & Iannaccone, 1978), (3) the number of resignations and board appointments to unexpired terms, (4) the number of primary elections, (5) the number of board positions open during the election year (Reed, 1989), and (6) any unique voter circumstances impacting voting patterns in the community, such as "director" district status.

The number of candidates running for school board seats from 1980 to 1986 was constant with candidates mostly running unopposed. Candidates at that time served two terms with no primary election necessary. From 1986 to 1987, one vacated board seat and one incumbent school board member ran with two candidates on each ballot. These elections also did not require a primary election. The resigned seat from 1986 was appointed. From 1988 to 1992, there were few school board member changes and the ones that did occur were not politically motivated. Replacements of these board seats were appointments. In 1992, three board positions were up for election with one incumbent school board member running against a single opponent and two vacated positions refilled by unopposed candidates. In this election, two candidates ran in each position so no primary election was necessary. The candidates running were all considered antagonists with a different set of values. Community members report that there was general dissatisfaction with the previous school board and superintendent at that time.

From 1993 to 2000, during the study period, there were 9 school board member changes with 4 resignations in 1995, 1 resignation in 1998, 3 resignations and 1 retirement in 1999. In all of these cases, the turnover was reported as non-political.

Primaries have not been necessary for any of the elections from 1980 to 2000. The number of appointees has remained fairly constant. From 1980 to 1988 there were 2 appointees, from 1988-1992 there were 2 appointees, and from 1993 to 2000, there were three appointees. All of the appointees ran for re-election as incumbents and all but one was re-elected. The board member who was not re-elected did not campaign and was reported as "having little interest in continuing in the position." All candidates but one had a single opponent.

Very little data were gathered concerning voting records before the study period of 1993 to 2000. During that time four incumbents ran and won the elections running against one candidate and garnishing around 70% of the vote.

Data of great interest in the Adams School District were the unique circumstances in the electorate of the community. First, the district is a "non-director" district. This means that all board positions are "at large." Opponents running for vacated or incumbent seats up for election can choose which seat to run against. All voters in the community vote for all positions. This is not true of all school districts in Washington state. Some districts are "director" districts which means that the school district is broken up into geographic sections. Only prospective candidates for election who live in the geographic zone of the vacated or challenged school board seat may run for election. It is easy to imagine that candidates for board position that may be more popular in the community may be disallowed from running because they live in the wrong area

of town. Some section of town may have no interested parties to run which may lead to a lone antagonist ending up on the school board without an endorsement from the community. Although this new board member is not symptomatic of general community dissatisfaction, the board member could proceed to cause change in the school board policies and superintendent. It is for reasons such as this, that often numerical data cannot be used to ascertain the real political picture in a community. Adams community is one such example. From 1992 to 1995, three out of the five board members remained constant, with the changes occurring in the remaining school board positions. Notable is the fact that twice, antagonists ran against strong incumbent opponents by choice when they could have filed for board seats that were vacated and run unopposed. The fact that they did not run for the open seats allowed board stability to continue. If they had done otherwise both candidates would have been elected onto the board together, and the board and subsequent superintendent may have been affected. Why the opponents did not run in vacated seats is unknown.

Another immeasurable factor in Adams is the fact that a large portion of the community does not vote. This is not because of a lack of interest. Military personnel who make up 60% of the community and school enrollment, are registered in their own hometowns rather than in Adams. This is normally because they often relocate, are avoiding taxes, or have an interest in their hometown politics. This creates a very unique voting situation where 60% of the community with school aged children can't vote and thus become mute in issues of school change through school board elections. Most voters in Adams are retirees and the smaller percentage of the community that have been in town for several generations. This means that even though the community has changed through the military base changes, the "old guard" has remained virtually unchanged from the 1980's. This has provided much more stability than might otherwise be expected. In one example, the superintendent shared that when the military base personnel changed in 1995 to more enlisted families with a lower income, they had a great interest in a school lunch program, which the district had never offered. Although they represented the majority of school patrons, their requests were ignored by the school board since the "old guard" voters in town were used to not having the program. School board incumbents were supported by being re-elected after making the decision not to start a lunch program. In fact, when antagonists ran against two incumbent board members in 1999 representing a change in the board, both opponents received only 30% of the vote.

Change in School Board Values

This change has a causal link with the previous change in voter participation in school board elections. If voters are dissatisfied and begin to run against and vote against incumbent board members, old board members are defeated or pressured to resign, and new board members with new values take their place. Data collected to indicate this change include: (1) a change in the number of incumbent board member defeats, (2) a change in the type of board member, for example gender, or socioeconomic composition, and (3) special circumstances concerning the personalities of defeated, resigning, or retiring board members and newly elected board members.

It is predicted by the Dissatisfaction Theory that an increase in incumbent defeat indicates dissatisfaction within the community toward the existing school board and its values. It has been suggested in most research comparing school board member and superintendent turnover that all turnover of incumbent school board members represents a defeat. It is

postulated that resigning board members are fearful of defeat and so resign before they have a chance to be defeated.

From 1993 to 2000, nine school member turnovers have occurred in Adams. Since 1980, no elected incumbent has been defeated at the polls. From 1993 to 2000, only one appointed board member was defeated at the polls. As mentioned earlier, he did not campaign and expressed little interest in competing for the position.

Of the nine board member turnovers from 1993 to 2000, three board members had families who became ill and the member needed to provide long term care for them at home or out of the state, 2 board members had job changes which took them out of the state, 1 board member died of cancer, 1 resigned due to a job change which increased her hours, 1 was defeated choosing not to campaign, and 1 chose not to re-run being at odds with the other board members.

During 1993 to 2000, the rate of turnover had increased from 2 board members to 3 board members over a four year average. The number of open positions in an election year increased from 1 to 2 per election from before 1993 to after 1993. The number of seats up for election had increased as a result of numerous resignations and retirements equaling nine from 1993 to 2000 with much fewer prior to 1993. During this time, all appointees and incumbents, except for one appointee, won their re-election by large margins.

The gender and socioeconomic status of school board members can change the culture and values of the school board and demonstrate more participation. In the Adams School District, the board had been composed of three men and two women from 1980 to 1988. From 1988 to 1992, the board was composed of 4 women and one man. From 1992 to 1997, the board was composed of three women and two men. From 1997 to 1998, the board was composed of three men and two women, and from 1998 to 2000, the board was composed of three women and two men. Since 1993 there have been 8 different women who have served on the school board, two who were appointed and were re-elected to serve. Two of the women have served and been re-elected for several terms. One has served since 1975 and served until her death in 1995, while one has served since 1988.

The socioeconomic status of the board has not changed much since 1980. The board has continued to be served mostly by professionals in the community who are supportive of the education. The most recent board has had an attorney, a police officer who worked in schools previously, and a retired past principal of Adams High School. One of the women on the board is a physician. The Adam's Education Association president who has lived in Adams for 30 years and has been the president for 10 years said, "the non-educational outside voice has not been too often heard on the school board." Military personnel, due to their transient job and non-voter status, are not present on the board although they constitute 60% of the school enrollment.

Another impact on the school board is, which board member chooses to retire or resign, and who replaces them. It is very possible that change in the board values is not due to community dissatisfaction as much as it is due to bad luck or timing. For example, in Adams, of all the appointments to the board, one board member who was appointed and then re-elected turned out to be an antagonist. This was not known by the voting public or by the other board members until after his election. During this board member's tenure, he created negativity and conflict on the board and voted to non-renew the superintendent's contract each year. The superintendent noted that if there had been more than one antagonist on the board he may have considered resigning his position. After this board member's four-year term, he choose not to run for his position. Two years before this board members re-election, a friend with similar

antagonistic feelings toward the status quo, ran for a school board seat. However, instead of running in a vacated position this opponent chose to run against the board president who was up for re-election and very popular in the community. The opponent received only 30% of the vote. An unknown individual, favorable toward the current board, ran unopposed in the vacated seat. Most school personnel believe that if this antagonist had run in the vacated position he would have won the seat, and both antagonists would have ended up on the board at the same time. This would not have been a statement of dissatisfaction by the community as much as timing and happenstance. However, it well may have compelled the superintendent to resign his position.

Another important piece of data is that while there was increased turnover from 1993 to 2000, three of the board members, constituting the majority, remained on the board while multiple changes occurred in the other two positions. This allowed the board to remain stable despite a numerical board turnover that would have been expected to lead to superintendent resignation when analyzing quantitative data. The same or fewer numbers of incumbent turnovers, if affecting three seats, could have changed the boards values.

Changes in School District Policy

The Dissatisfaction Theory suggests that with the change in school board member values, caused by incumbent school board member defeat, comes the eminent demise of the superintendent. In Adams School District, although nine school board member turnovers occurred, the superintendent has remained the same from 1993 to the present, and is currently well supported in the community.

It is important to review some previous data concerning past superintendents at Adams School District. In 1986 a superintendent who had been in the district for 16 years retired, and was replaced by a superintendent who resigned after one year. In 1988, an interim superintendent served and was replaced at the end of that year with a newly hired superintendent. This superintendent was different from the previous short-tenured superintendents since he was hired through a national search and extensive selection process. This superintendent served from 1988 to 1993. Dr. Miller was also hired in 1988 as the Assistant superintendent from outside the district. In 1993, this most recent past superintendent resigned, due to budgetary problems, political pressure, and a recent change of three school board seats representing two defeats at the polls. Dr. Miller was hired for one year as interim superintendent and was then placed into the position without the job being posted.

In light of the serious budget problems, Dr. Miller started by eliminating four administrative positions, including the assistant superintendent, a high school vice principal, a Title I coordinator and a staff development coordinator. Three full time staff trainers were returned to classroom duties. Over the next year, twenty classroom staff and a few custodians were reduced. All staff reductions were accomplished through retirements. Dr. Miller also cut instructional aid time, increased class sizes, added student fees for extra-curricular participation, and reduced the length of the school day.

In addition, to the personnel and program changes Dr. Miller dealt with 6 arbitrations successfully during his first year as superintendent. This was accomplished by contacting and working with the Association president. His open style and willingness to listen and compromise gained him support from the Association president who still holds that position. The Teachers Association was also supportive through the budget and staffing cuts.

Dr. Miller has also led many changes in the curriculum in response to the Washington State reform movement. Test scores on the state Washington Assessment of Student Learning

(WASL) exam have increased. Dr. Miller has led the passage of a school bond, which allowed the district to complete a new middle school in 1998. Dr. Miller has recently led the multi-million dollar purchase of a building to house the central office. The old office space will become a student learning center. A technology bond has also been passed. All the bonds have passed with a 70% approval rate.

The board meetings are reported to be lightly attended, except for two instances when fees for student parking at the high school was proposed, and a complaints that a soccer team didn't spend the night after a game. The local newspaper is objective toward school district news and does not "smear" the district, which has helped keep potential conflict to a minimum.

Another area of importance is how the superintendent responds to difficult situations. During the four-year tenure of the antagonistic school board member, Dr. Miller reports the board member would become contentious on almost every motion, with many votes, that used to be unanimous, being a four-to-one vote. The board member berated any staff who presented at the board meetings, and meetings began to run late into the night. He sensed that the other board members were unhappy. Others in the audience shared with him in private, that facial expression and body language from he and the other 4 board members revealed their discomfort. Dr. Miller said, "I put most of my information into a bulletin that I sent out prior to each board meeting, so that during the meeting I could remain quiet, and let the board members handle the problem in their own way. If I were asked a direct question I would answer it, but I would not argue with the individual or volunteer information."

When asked who had the most influence on the board, school personnel and board members responded that the superintendent was well respected, but did not control the board. The school board president said, "If Dr. Miller is asked (a question) he will answer, but it's our meeting, not his, so if not asked he's out if it." This conveys a belief by the staff and board members that the board is an "arena" style board.

Analysis of the Data

The qualitative data sheds valuable light onto the circumstances at Adams School District that simply would not have surfaced through analysis of quantitative data alone. According to the high number of school board member turnovers, it was expected that the community values had changed since 1993 and that the superintendent should have been replaced. This clearly had not occurred, which disallows statistical analysis verification of essential causal components of the Dissatisfaction Theory model. This is consistent with other efforts using quantitative data analysis alone to confirm the predictive qualities of the Dissatisfaction Theory. Significant and unique data, like the predominance of the military base and it's transient personnel, no maintenance and operations levy, 60% of the voting constituency unable to vote, and most of the post 1993 board turnover clearly not from defeat or political pressure, changes the conclusions on whether the Dissatisfaction Theory could adequately describe the political chain of events in this town. Even if a majority of the community was dissatisfied in Adams, since they cannot vote and they can not run for school board seats, a major assumption in the Theory is hampered. In addition, as mentioned above, the quantitative data comparing incumbent school board member defeat and superintendent turnover would predict superintendent turnover after 1993 to increase with the increase of school board member turnover. In fact, superintendent turnover occurred in 1986, 1987, and 1993 during a time preceded by equal to or less school board member turnover. However, in spite of these obstacles, the political chain of events still seems to follow the Dissatisfaction Theory in its basic theoretical premises.

In Adams, before 1993, data showed evidence of a change in community values that we do not see in the post 1993 data. The assessed valuation in the district had its biggest changes during the military base expansion in 1980 and during its decline in 1991. In 1980, Adams lost its rural characteristics and was experiencing an influx of population with the new community members holding differing values than the original community members. Long time community members remember a shift from a "Christian, Conservative, Dutch" community to a secular community. Expansion in the military base dramatically increased Federal funds to the local school district. At up to an additional $500 per student, the district was considered wealthy. As a result, the district did not have need of a maintenance and operations levy, a major communications tool for community to voice dissatisfaction with the district. The district also began to expand, over-staffing the school district and increasing expenditures. This trend came to halt with an 18% downsizing of the base in 1991 and the simultaneous decline of the Federal funds. Since the military base constitutes the single community economic and population base for Adams, there were dramatic and immediate changes in the economic status for both the community and the schools as a result of these changes. Since 1993, notwithstanding the high board member turnover, assessed valuation and population has remained fairly steady.

Following this change in community values before 1993, data did not show an increase in political participation in school board elections. Participation remained constant except for a slight increase in bona fide incumbent defeat in 1986. The lack of increase in political participation is not suprising, since 60% of the school patrons and voters cannot vote or run for office due to the nature of their transient positions. Despite a change in community, the "community of voters" has remained fairly constant.

Data does not show a drastic change in school board member values, with board turnover remaining fairly constant from 1980 to 2000. In fact, school board turnover, vacated seats, appointments, board gender, and socioeconomic status either remained steady or slightly increased after 1993. No incumbent board member has been defeated in an election and the turnover is verified to be non-political. Unique happenstance regarding which opponent ran for which seat has allowed the board to retain 3 majority school board members from 1980 to the present. One exception was the change of two board members in 1992 who were interested in change.

Despite the absence of quantitative or qualitative confirmation of change in community participation in elections or school board member values change, Adams did see a change in district policies. This was caused by the resignation of a superintendent after one year in 1987, and again in 1988. This seems to correspond to the increase in population and assessed valuation in the 1980's and with the retirement of a superintendent who had been in the district for 17 years. After trying to replace the position with an "inside" candidate twice, the board sought an outside applicant who remained from 1988 to 1993. Once again, the decline of the military base and the reduction of Federal funds in 1991 led the district into a downward financial spiral which culminated in the resignation of the superintendent in 1993, pressured by two new board members who wanted change. The public was interested in a dramatic change and so supported the new superintendent in drastic budget-cutting measures. The superintendent's response to the community's values change has allowed him to continue being supported to the present time. An increase in school board turnover during his tenure from 1993 to the present time appears to be inconsequential and does not represent true school board member defeat or community dissatisfaction despite what the quantitative data might suggest. Another important factor is the superintendent himself and some luck.

The superintendent has clearly responded to potential political turmoil with a technique discovered in research on how superintendents survive political conflict (Lutz, 1982). Dr. Miller first created an "arena" board style from what had been an "elite" board style. The existing board appointed new board members who agreed with their values. They did not have any election concerns because, although their community had changed, the voting group had not. This led to a separation of values as evidenced by the lack of control on the spending problem that led to several board turnovers and the superintendent resignation in 1993. Dr. Miller allowed the board to operate as a more open group as evidenced by the responses that the superintendent does not "run" the board. When there was an antagonistic board member, Dr. Miller stepped away from direct board meeting control and allowed the board president to handle the conflict, thus divesting power from himself and providing protection in case this antagonist had indeed eventually won support from other new board members. Although this did not occur, Dr. Miller appeared to the staff as a supportive "martyr for education's cause" and not "power hungry." This protective "savvy" contributes to Dr. Miller's longevity as much as the extrinsic factors noted in the Dissatisfaction Theory.

Additionally, luck plays a role in the political chain of events of a district. Events are not always predictable but can change a school board's values or belay change. In Adams, school board change was averted by the choice of which seat to run against on the school board by an antagonist opponent. On the other hand, 4 years of board turmoil occurred when an appointee turned out to be an antagonist in disguise. In Adams, and many other communities, numerous school board seats vacated from job changes or illness are filled by unopposed and unknown candidates. These replacements do not necessarily carry the wishes of the community. This phenomena of "randomness" happens more frequently in "director" districts where your physical address selects who can run for the school board rather than the wishes of the general community. These random, unpredictable, and quantitatively immeasurable events interfere with or extend the time span of the Dissatisfaction Theory. In the case of an uncontested board placement that is against the status quo but is not selected through community values change, the community will eventual remove that person from the board, which describes what happened to the lone antagonist that ended up on the board in Adams. In this example, the Dissatisfaction Theory still describes the sequence of political events well, it simply took a longer time span to see the Theory come to fruition.

The Brown Community, School District, and Superintendent

District profile

The Brown School District is located in the suburban town of Brown, Washington nestled between two large urban areas. The community encompasses a Native American reservation and has the presence of a large military base nearby. The economy is based mostly on light and precision manufacturing, and also has a large craft and repairs industry. In the last ten years, the community has experienced accelerated growth, doubling its population. The growth is based upon several important changes in the area.

The Native American reservation, with the advent of legalized gambling casinos, has grown tremendously. A new casino was completed in 1995 and the area has experienced growth from that new industry. Another cause of quick growth has been annexation, which accounts for 69% of the growth. Adjoining county lands and small communities have been annexed into the town. This has been caused by growth in the adjoining urban areas, which are pushing their

boundaries closer to this community. In fact, this community is hardly distinguished from the developed suburbs of the cities flanking it. As a result of this encroachment, the community has become a bedroom community for the adjoining urban centers, and most people in Brown now work outside the town. The growth is obvious in Brown with multiple home additions, strip malls, and light commercial buildings. In 2000, over 18,000 building permits were granted, an increase of 300% over the past ten years.

In 1990, the community was considered rural and separate from it's urban neighbors to the north and south. Brown, in 1990, had a population of around 20,000. As a result of the growth in the adjoining urban areas, a new casino on the reservation, and annexation, Brown found itself a bedroom community for both of the adjoining urban centers. The superintendent said, "The wave of suburbia is going over us, and with it has come the demise of our small town and an increase in the demands on schools." The increased population has brought more minorities into Brown, but overall growth is such that the percentage of minority members, particularly in the Native American group, has declined.

In 1990, the school district had a student enrollment of 6,000 but now, in 2000, the district student enrollment is around 12,000. The students are housed in one high school of around 2,000, three middle schools of 1,000 each, ten elementary schools supporting around 5,000 students, and a new alternative high school, middle school, and learning center serving around 400 students. Growth is steadily increasing with an expected 3%, or a 300 student boost, each year.

Before 1995, the school board had been very stable, with no board change for ten years. Since then, there have been only 3 board changes, from 1995 to 2000. The board and administration were described as a "good ol' boy system."

Dr. Smith was selected as the superintendent in 1996 as a result of a national search and careful selection process. Dr. Smith describes himself as a "career" superintendent who has served for 20 years as the executive school officer in three other states moving to progressively larger school districts. Dr. Smith came to this current position from another state on the east coast of the country. The office of Dr. Smith is distinguished with a wall covered with plaques and awards from across the country for excellence as a school superintendent. Dr. Smith is the district's fifth superintendent since 1992.

During these four years in Brown, the superintendent has made little change. He has instead been surviving through an onslaught of school board controversy that he says, "drove the other superintendents from the district." In fact, he noted that upon his hiring, the school district board, "placed a stipulation in my contract that I would be monetarily penalized if I left the district early." Dr. Smith describes the district he inherited as "incestuous" and "infamous for internal promotion." As to the health of the school board he said, "they (the school board) took great pains to show that they worked together, which was not the case." Dr. Smith has spent the last four years trying to create a working relationship amongst the school board and stave off the exodus of quality building level administration, tired of the conflict.

Change in Community Values

Changes in the community values can be indicated by a variety of demographic changes within the community over time. The data reported here include: (1) changes in assessed valuation of property within the school district, (2) changes in school enrollment, as hypothesized by Lutz & Iannaccone (1970), and (3) changes in socioeconomic status of the community. Data in these areas was collected for the time period 1990 to the present, a span of

10 years, since this is the time when change occurred in the community that might be relevant to this study of Dissatisfaction Theory indicators.

The assessed valuation in the district doubled from 1995-2000 as a result of growth in the surrounding urban centers, annexations of surrounding smaller communities, and an increase of the Native American reservation population. The community has gone from a small town to a large suburban bedroom community for the adjoining urban centers. The community has been inundated with building projects and housing developments, strip malls, and sales and service businesses, which have increased by 300% in the last 5 years. The school has likewise been kept busy building new facilities to accommodate the increase of 6,000 students over the last 10 years. As a consequence of the community growth being composed of mainly professional people, assessed valuation of homes in the area has risen dramatically and the lure of cheaper housing that drew the commuter population is beginning to wane. Longtime community members have seen tremendous increases in the value of their homes and the accompanying tax increases that follow.

From 1990 to 2000, the population of Brown increased from 20,000 in 1990 to around 54,000 in 2000 and still growing by 3-5% each year. Student enrollment has also dramatically increased, going from 6,000 FTE students in 1990 to the present 12,000 FTE students with growth continuing at 3% or 300 FTE students per year.

There has been an influx of upper middle class professionals entering the community since 1990, as Brown has become a bedroom community for urban executives seeking a quieter, safer life in the suburbs. The commute to either of the urban centers to the north and south of Brown is about 30 minutes. The majority of new housing developments have been upper middle class dwellings selling for between $150,000 and $250,000.

Change in Citizen Participation in School Board Elections

The number of candidates running for school board seats has increased in Brown during the study period. Before 1993, the board had remained relatively stable with few board turnovers and few opponents. The current board president took office in 1993 and ran unopposed. She ran for a seat that had been resigned by a female school board member who had served since 1989. In 1993, the board was composed of 5 members with two or three terms serving on the school board. In 1995, two long serving board members retired and two opponents ran for each of the open seats. Before 1995, board members ran largely unopposed while in 1995 to the present board members had 2 candidates running.

Because there were few changes in school board seats before 1995, there is little data on votes cast. In 1995, the two seats were vacated, and two unknown candidates competed for the positions. An incumbent board member also ran in 1995 and regained his seat earning 70% of the vote. In 1999, a major change occurred in the number of votes cast for incumbents. In that election, the two board members elected in 1995 were defeated. One of the board members chose not to re-run but instead ran for a city mayoral office and was resoundingly defeated receiving only 25% of the vote. Community participants noted that the defeat was, "imminent based on the board member's behavior during their tenure on the school board." The other board member ran for his board seat and received only 30% of the vote. The superintendent said, "In my judgment, it (the defeat by large voting margin) was a resounding statement by the community."

There have not been many appointments to the school board, with zero from 1993 to 2000. All board members leaving retired or chose not to run again. There has also been little or no change in the number of primaries needed, with none during the study period.

There has been an increase in the number of school board positions open during election years. Pre-1993 saw very few open seat with only one due to a retirement. In 1993, there were two open seats and again there was one open seat caused by political pressure and one defeat. Clearly, the number of contested and open seats has increased in the 1995 and 1999 elections, compared with previous history.

In Brown, the voter participation is rather interesting due to the rapid growth in a relatively short time. Although the community population, and thus its values, have indeed changed since 1990, the "voting" community has taken a few years to change. One long time school administrator in Brown said, "Brown has grown so rapidly in the last 10 years, I don't know whether there has been a detachment develop or what. Many of the new people that live here are really not active members of this community. They don't really have a connection to Brown and don't really know what's going on or feel like a part of the town". Another staff member believed that the 1999 elections were a sign that the new "voting" community had finally "woken up" and "made a statement" to the school district.

Change in School Board Values

Change in the school board values in Brown is minimal, with only one uncontested board change in 1993, two board changes due to retirements in 1995, and two challenges and defeats in 1999. When reviewing quantitative and qualitative data the turnover in 1993 and 1995 were not considered bona fide defeats, and followed the normal subdued and gradual turnover common to Brown for the past 20 years. The board member who did retire had served for two or three terms and felt it was time for someone else to serve. No political pressure was reported from anyone in the district that would suggest the board members stepped down due to pressure from either the board or the community. Only in 1999 do we have what can be considered 2 school board member defeats, a relatively small number over the course of a 10 years period, however, a change nonetheless from zero defeats prior to 1999 to two in 1999. Due to the 1995 and 1999 elections, the rate of turnover changed from an average of 1 to an average of 3 over a four year period.

The gender and socioeconomic status of a school board can cause a values change on the board. In the Brown School District, the board was composed of three men and two women from the mid 1980's until 1989. In 1989, the board was comprised of three women and two men. With the election of two new board members in 1995, the board composition changed to 4 men and 1 women. The subsequent defeat of the board members elected in 1995 changed the gender composition to three men and two women. Consequently, the board's gender composition has remained relatively stable over the past 20 years.

The socioeconomic status of the board has been mainly blue collar workers and non-professionals. Despite the rapid growth and the proximity to urban centers, the school board has been comprised of longtime citizens from the area who were engaged in labor and industry, or who were stay-at-home parents. With the new board members selected in 1999, the board added 2 professional members, both working in management positions in the adjoining urban communities.

Another consideration to school board member change is which board member chooses to retire or resign and who replaces them. In the case of Brown, the school district is a "non-

director" district. This came into play in changing the school boards values in 1995. Because the district was an "at-large" non-director district, anyone could run for positions on the board regardless of where they lived. Unknown to most in the district, candidates running for the two retired seats in 1995 were from the same community church organization with a particular agenda to change the school board, the superintendent, and the school policies. Upon their arrival on the board, conflict and open controversy ensued until their ultimate removal by the electorate in 1999. One purpose for using the "director" district approach is to isolate the board seats into separate geographical sections of the community to help ensure a more varied constituency representation. If the district had been a "director" district, these two candidates who also lived in the same neighborhood would not been able to run for both seats and eventually win those seats to represent a fairly small and vocal segment of the community.

Change in School District Policy

In the Brown School District, although only five school board member turnovers occurred from 1993 to 1995 with only two bona fide defeats in 1999, there were four superintendents in Brown during the same time.

Before the population growth in the Brown community, superintendents served terms that averaged 7-10 years. Brown school district had a superintendent from 1981 to 1992 who retired in Brown. Following the district's normal course of action, an inside candidate was promoted into the position of superintendent with no posting of the position or search conducted. This superintendent, the old business manager, stayed from 1992 to 1994 and left to take a promotion to another position. This change caused some consternation amongst the existing board who were "shocked by his sudden and unannounced departure." The board next decided to seek an outside superintendent and conducted a national search. They ended up hiring the assistant superintendent from a very prestigious school district in Washington State. This superintendent tendered his resignation less than 6 months into the position. It seems this superintendent had taken the job, knowing that the superintendent in the district he left was planning to retire. He knew that he would need a previous superintendency "under his belt" to meet the requirements of the posting and that he would probably be the heir apparent. He did, in fact, leave to take the superintendency in the district he had come from. School board members were shocked and surprised stating, "We are very angry. The superintendent lied to us. He told us he wasn't applying for jobs, then two weeks later he signed a contract and handed in his resignation." In reviewing the qualitative data, this superintendent had not been pressured to leave by the board or the community, but rather, enjoyed their support. In fact, community members and staff began to complain to the board that the Brown district could not keep superintendents, and wondered if there was something wrong with them. In this case, it appeared that the community did not want these superintendents to leave and were surprised when they did.

Finally, the current superintendent was hired in 1995 after a nationwide search. Dr. Smith came from the eastern United States and had a tenure of 20 years as a superintendent. Dr. Smith's contract included a penalty for leaving the district early. The superintendent characterized the Brown School District as a "good ol' boy system of internal self promotion", and the school board as a "rubber stamp committee." Dr. Smith started by "trying to get the board members to begin discussing their disagreements that had never been dealt with, including criticism from the community to the board about the rapid turnover of superintendents." Two months later the two antagonist board members were elected onto the school board and the board became "divisive." Previously unanimous voting became a constant 3 to 2 split with 2 positive

votes, two antagonistic votes, and one swing vote from an indecisive board member who reportedly, "marched to his own drummer."

Dr. Smith spent the next four years fighting a "bitter battle" while numerous school personnel, particularly administrative staff, left the district. Dr. Smith was pleased by the defeat of the two antagonists in the 1999 election but was not surprised. Dr. Smith said, "I was aware for more than a year that there was going to be an organized effort to change those two board members. The teachers union was a big part of that with their formation of a political action committee aimed at defeating those board members." When asked if he was harmed by the controversy on the board over the past 4 years he said, "For the most part I was seen as another victim and people began to ask me if I was going to leave like the others. I thought about leaving and maybe I should have, it wasn't pleasant around here."

Analysis of the Data

The quantitative data from Phase I of this study would not have predicted the political outcome in the Brown School District and would not have supported the Dissatisfaction Theory. The quantitative data gave the picture of a school district with few school board changes but numerous superintendent change, that was not preceded by school board turnover and occurred before any potential conflict from the defeats in 1999. It would be interesting to determine how many of these types of districts there are represented in the quantitative data. Lack of statistical significance in the quantitative data analysis may be caused by these types of data, which could greatly affect the researcher's ability to support the Dissatisfaction Theory. Anomalies in specific parts of the causal chain of events predicted by the Dissatisfaction Theory can diminish support of the Theory's efficacy if not all factors are analyzed with great care. This is certainly necessary when analyzing the data in the Brown School District.

In Brown, there was clearly evidence of significant community change through the population increase from 1990 to 2000. Both the community and student enrollment nearly doubled, bringing with it a change in the economy, socioeconomic status, minority mix, and community values.

Community participation did not immediately increase as evidenced through an increase in school board seats open or through an increase in opponents or votes cast. Instead, the new population remained fairly "detached" from the school issues from 1993 to 1999.

In 1995, several new board members sought vacated seats on the board, to ensure that "new values", becoming predominant due to population growth, did not affect the school district or what it taught to its children. Longtime school staff said, "These two new board members (elected in 1995) were part of the old guard in town who wanted things to remain small, Christian and conservative." This could clearly be viewed as a battle between the old Brown and the new Brown community values. At first, the new community neither noticed, nor cared about the new board members, however, controversy caught the public's attention. It became apparent that these new board members did not represent the new community values and so they were removed by large voting margins in the next election. In examining the qualitative data, we are better informed as to what actually occurred in Brown, and that the events do follow the Dissatisfaction Theory. Once the community realized that the board values did not match theirs, they took action with increased voter participation in the 1999 election and resolved their concerns.

One of the interesting points of data in this study is the observation that quantitatively there was never a large turnover in the number of school board members. Clearly, this is an

indication that many board turnovers can result in little or no school board values change, while a few key board changes can cause massive change.

Another interesting anomaly of this data were the numerous superintendent turnovers from 1992 to 1995. In looking at the sequence of events in the district, the superintendent turnovers really separate from these events entirely. The community was dissatisfied with the school board and changed it while viewing the Dr. Smith as another victim. The turnover of superintendents from 1992 to 1995 could be considered a strange coincidence, and represents little in this political chain of events other than possibly bringing more intense scrutiny from the school staff and the community toward the school board operations. The Dissatisfaction Theory was followed in the Brown School District although not supported by the sheer quantity of superintendent or board turnover numbers.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine what kind of relationship, if any, exists between incumbent school board member defeat and superintendent turnover. More basic is the question of whether the Dissatisfaction Theory is useful for describing the data collected in this study. When the quantitative results of this study, conducted in Washington State from 1993-2000 are examined, it is impossible to support that incumbent school board member defeat leads to superintendent turnover although there is an indication that distinguishing between school board member defeat and turnover may be a powerful variable for future quantitative studies. Through qualitative research techniques, it is possible to confirm essential tenets of the Dissatisfaction Theory taking place in local school politics in Washington State.

Lutz and Merz (1992) contended that larger, more diverse school communities of today may no longer be able to find a consistent set of values. Community decline in civic organizations and low voter turnout has contributed to the increased isolation of the citizenry in America caused by, among other things, increased technology and the economic necessity of dual worker families. This raises the question as to whether there can exist in this era, a single common value shared by enough of the community to affect enough dissatisfaction to make the Theory work. Even in this study, in a community of only around 54,000, the citizenry was described as "detached", and it was said, "these new people are not really part of the community, they just sleep here at night".

This phenomena has even been recognized by the originators of the Dissatisfaction Theory who noted that changes in today's society may have influenced major components of the Dissatisfaction Theory. Iannaccone (1996) said, "The public's ability to threaten the fiscal lifeline of the schools in the larger American school districts has been largely eliminated by a variety of bureaucratic protections.... The vulnerability of the earliest part of the century has given way to a political subsystem's invulnerability" (p. 119). Iannaccone (1996) seems to join the theorists who support the idea that local school systems are undemocratic by calling for the abolishment of school boards in larger school systems. He says, "A serious commitment to the education of children requires the elimination of existing bureaucratic structures above the classroom" (p. 119).

The quantitative portions of this study would seem to agree with the conclusions of recent researchers that do not supported the Dissatisfaction Theory. However, this study purports the continued use of the Dissatisfaction Theory, which is supported by the qualitative data in

reported from Phase II of this study as well as the use of a new variable, not used by previous studies- the distinction between school board member turnover and bona fide defeat. The main conclusion of this study is directed more at the method of research necessary when studying the Dissatisfaction Theory in the current political environment.

Recommendations

One of the primary recommendations of this study is the importance of using a qualitative data approach when studying the Dissatisfaction Theory. Evidence of community change, public participation in local elections, school board change, and policy change may not be detectable at a statistically significant level to rely upon quantitative measures. Strong evidence may appear in one of these four areas but be weak or absent in another. Also, the sequence of the events leading to policy change may be absent but still create the resultant change. Another phenomena is that each district is unique and data may ebb and flow between community episodic conflict and even school board turnover before the right combination of variables leads to the ultimate turnover of the superintendent. Additionally, unique circumstances can alter the effectiveness of the Dissatisfaction Theory by removing assumptions that make the theory work—like the assumption that the patrons of a school district have the opportunity to vote, a theoretical absolute absent in the Adams School District for 60% of its voters. Overall, future researchers should use a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures when studying the Dissatisfaction Theory. Researchers should realize that even if the number of quantitative data is expanded, significant indicators of community dissatisfaction may remain hidden, only to be discovered by qualitative data collection methods. Furthermore, this study suggests the necessity of in-depth analysis of all districts that do not follow the Dissatisfaction Theory model, before making conclusions on the efficacy of the Theory.

This study also concludes that future analysis between incumbent school board member defeat and superintendent turnover be conducted, making distinctions and statistical analyses of school board turnover versus school board defeat. It is also suggested that superintendent turnover be categorized to remove nonpolitical retirement to determine whether this affects statistical conclusions.

This study's findings support the conclusion that longitudinal studies spanning at least 50 years be conducted. It was clear in the qualitative phase of this study, that the indicators predicted by the Dissatisfaction Theory occurred just before the study period. If not for the follow-up qualitative study, these events would have been missed and the data would have refuted the Theory. With these new data, the Theory was supported. This points to the importance of long-term and in-depth study when attempting to support the Dissatisfaction Theory.

Finally, researchers should continue to explore the best method of analyzing the statistical data gathered in studies of the Dissatisfaction Theory. It appears that various researchers have made it a practice to return to data and reanalyze it until it agrees with the Dissatisfaction Theory. It would be much more palatable if statistical researchers could focus efforts in this area in order to establish a single method, or set of statistical methods, concluded to be reliable in the analysis of this type of data. Without that confidence, all findings in this study and many other are held up to question.

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